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## ONLINE MARKETING: MARKET BUZZ TO SHOPPING EASE

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**Abstract:-**World has become a global place or say a global market today with all its extra effects added by the information and technology. Today, a producer or a customer has no time to go into the market for its purchases or sales. Everything today is expected to happen at the speed of light. With the advancement in technology, internet today has become a very useful and powerful tool in the hands of the buyers and the sellers to satisfy their needs. Today the buying and selling transaction has become so hassle-free that both the buyer and the seller are keenly inclined towards online marketing. But all good things come with its individual threats as well. As more customers shop online, finding new ways to reach them becomes more crucial than ever. The Internet's global reach has minimized the need for costly ad campaigns, while providing opportunities for a more focused marketing approach. But still without a comprehensive, specific marketing approach, businesses will experience sluggish sales and uncertain profits. On the vice versa, the customer too suffers from very limited scope in terms of online buying as compared to traditional buying process. Thus everything comes with its pros and cons.

**Keywords:**Internet Marketing, Information Technology, Merits and Demerits of Online Marketing

### INTRODUCTION

Welcome friends to the world of shopping where buying now starts at your finger tips, yes your mobile, your tablet, your I-pad or further say your laptop in the morning with your cup of tea and ends with the requirement at your doorstep at the stipulated time say a week max to max in that case. This kind of buying process definitely makes one think over the activities of the market that move today with the speed of light, the scenario of market today that changes just at some finger clicks. Yes how does this happen at such a fast pace!! What is that hidden mantra that cracks the customer's mind so comfortably which was said to be the black box in the past?? Let's have a look further. Gone are those days when market was defined as,

"A market is any place where the sellers of a particular good or service can meet with the buyers of that goods and service where there is a potential for a transaction to take place. The buyers must have something they can offer in exchange for there to be a potential transaction". (1)

Here one should specifically take note of the term "place" which has no more existence in the world of marketing today. Business or a transaction takes place as comfortably or conveniently without any market place coming into picture. Existence of market in terms of place has totally become immaterialist today. Then how did this transformation take place? Who has affected the revolutionary moves of marketing to such an extent?? Yes, just like in other fields, technology has bestowed its best blessing here too. Buying and selling, the two important concepts of marketing have experienced such a drastic and dramatic change in no time. The all credit goes to technology for sure. Here the concept online marketing has taken birth.

### WHAT IS ONLINE MARKETING

Before clubbing the two concepts, i.e. online and marketing together, let us understand the meaning of the terms individually.

### Definition of Marketing

“Marketing is the activity, set of institutions, and processes for creating, communicating, delivering, and exchanging offerings that have value for customers, clients, partners, and society at large”. (2)

Let us understand the definition in simple terms. Marketing involves each that activity which leads to a business to follow that path which ends up in customer satisfaction to its fullest. It refers to all those actions which support in promoting and selling products to customers. To make it much simpler, marketing is everything you do to place your product or service in the hands of potential customers. The goal of marketing is to present information about products to consumers in such a way that the consumer realizes it fills some need in their lives and they make a purchase. From a societal point of view, marketing is the link between a society's material requirements and its economic patterns of response. Marketing satisfies these needs and wants through exchange processes and building long-term relationships. Marketing blends art and applied science (such as behavioral sciences) and makes use of information technology.

When it comes to speak about information and technology, here the term online marketing comes into existence. With the advent of technology, life has become much simpler for the customers and competition has become much tougher for the producers. Customers have got end number of options to collect all the essential information before making their purchases. They have options in buying with reference to selection of products and services, options in payments like cash or credit, options in availability with reference to venue and period. Now in such a globalized atmosphere, when the world has become such a small market customers have also become choosy. So here the mantra that works is Survival of the best. Now the producers are ready to stretch to that extra mile to give ease and comfort to their customers. Thus the concept of Online Marketing has received burning importance today.

### Definition of Online Marketing

Online Marketing also called as Internet Marketing is the art and science of selling products and/or services over digital networks, such as the Internet and cellular phone networks.(3)

The art of online marketing involves finding the right online marketing mix of strategies that appeals to your target market and will actually translate into sales. Due to extra channels or media available for the customers today to reach to its best requirement, it becomes very much necessary for a producer to find out several new means or sources to track the potential customers in right time, before his competitor does so. Thanks to technology. Technology has opened the doors of unlimited potentialities for the customers as well as the producers. It has offered the traditional marketing techniques with an array of powerful tools and methodologies for promoting products and services through the Internet. Online marketing connects organizations with qualified potential customers and takes business development to much different heights than traditional marketing/advertising. Thus no matter what is the size of the business, majority of businesses now have brought their business in the world of web.

Online marketing or internet marketing or digital marketing or web marketing, several names to say, combines the technical and creative aspects of the World Wide Web such as advertising, designing, development and sales.

### Strategies of Online Marketing

Understanding the dynamics of online marketing is a strategic imperative for businesses in today's online centric world. Basically, online marketing operates by using a single or a blend of different strategies. The ultimate objective to be served by each of the strategy is same but the method may differ from one to another. The strategies work together in order to drive relevant traffic to a business (either online or off) and then convert a one time visitor into a returning, loyal customer. Well structured campaigns may use any combination of a number of different strategies.

**Let's have a look on the different online marketing strategies:-**

#### 1. Search Engine Optimization (SEO)

Some would say that SEO is really the work horse behind digital marketing. It is an effective means to increase ROI by helping improve a site's ranking in the SERPs so that traffic increases on the site. SEO specialists have to stay on top of the ever changing algorithms and updating done by the search engines in order to modify their campaigns to reap the greatest benefit. SEO best practices helps website's rank organically in SERPs, drive relevant and valuable traffic to sites, encourages conversions and helps the website maintain its page rank. Google is the search engine of choice for New Zealanders with over 90% market share. (4)

## 2.Social Media DM Strategies

Social media is nothing new anymore. But it is one of the newest strategies among the other online marketing strategies. It is rapidly growing to be one of the most popular strategies. There are end numbers of social media platforms available and businesses can benefit from different types based on the nature and size of their business. The most popular or well known social sites include Facebook, LinkedIn, Twitter, Google+, Pinterest and YouTube. The social media contributes by offering an open platform to the customers as well as the producers. This allows audiences to engage with the company or brand. Companies are able to monitor followers on a regular, even daily basis while also keeping them up on the latest news or releases in their business.

## 3.Online Press Releases

Online press releases are the developed version of the traditional ones, but the difference here is that the audience is much larger online. Press releases as well as industry related articles are online publications which are written and optimized and then distributed to various websites according to the class of the target audience. Just like a traditional press report, they are the work of a journalist or editor who writes the content to help a business gain exposure for their brand.

## 4.Digital Advertising

It has literally never been easier to promote a product, service or brand online. There are lots of possibilities when it comes to incorporating digital advertising into the campaign. Google Ad Words uses keyword research and data to create ads which can be textual, banners or image based. Advertising on Facebook can be so specific that certain age groups, genders and even those with special interests will see appropriate ads. This lets the business person reach the precise audience they are targeting.

## 5.Analytics data

All the different tools that are used to make a digital marketing campaign work are futile attempts if there is no way to track the efforts to find out what is and what is not working. There are presently several different analytics programs which can offer extensive details into how a website is performing. This lets webmasters, business personnel or SEO specialists focus on any of the metrics. This is an essential part of an online marketing campaign and without it there really is no solid way of gauging the success of the campaign.

## STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF ONLINE MARKETING

Just like every coin has two sides, same principle applies for online marketing too. World is changing with the speed of light, and so are the requirements of the customers today. The producer today has to enter into the market with all his arms and weapons to gear up his business in no time. Information and technology has extended its help to such producers. But technology along with its ease in access factor, time saving factor, etc. brings lot of threats also. As a producer or a customer feels convenience in enjoying the creamy benefits of online marketing, one has to be alert as well as aware about the other side also i.e. the weaknesses or the demerits of online marketing. Let's put light on some of them:-

### Strengths of Online Marketing

**1.Fast availability of the information:** This is the most fascinating factor for the producers as well as the customers as to why one opts for online marketing. It is quite delighting to know that online marketing is one such platform where information is found to be available with ease as well as with speed. On the part of the producers, it is quite conveniently for him to put his products/services online so that the information reaches to the mass in no time. On the other hand, the clients/users can easily get information, by navigating the internet, about the products that they wish to purchase, and besides that, they can check the information at anytime of the day.

**2.Ease in comparison and competition:** As the title itself suggests online marketing provides ease in comparison as well as competition for the producers and the customers too. Producers by referring to several websites can comfortably implement their marketing strategy and earn their market share in the situation of tough competition. Equally when it comes to the customers, today's customers hardly make their purchases without a thought of comparison. They reach their decision of final purchase only when he has fully satisfied his thirst of information and comparison.

**3.Expansion for the companies:** For the companies that are aspiring for expansion in a short run of time, online marketing is one of the best strategies. Presenting their business on the Internet can help the expansion of the company from a local market to national and international markets at the same time, offering almost infinite expanding possibilities.

**4.Marketing at low budget:** Online marketing is one time investment for the companies for the purpose of marketing. It allows the companies to save money, since the online marketing campaigns don't require a large amount of investment and at the same time, on the internet everything can be measured, thus it's easier for the companies to know almost instantly if their campaign is working or not, what company or user is interested in their products, from what cities or countries are they, etc. Minimal advertising cost is a top advantage associated with Internet marketing.

**5.Business 24\*7:** As far as business is concerned your shop or your company remains open 24\*7 which means you have full scope of business twenty four hours a day and seven days a week. Since there is no time zone you earn locally as well as internationally in that case. On the part of the customer nothing acts as a barrier when it comes to your purchasing thirst. Product or service of your choice is available to you as and when you wish to buy.

#### WEAKNESSES OF ONLINE MARKETING

**1.Tangibility factor makes a mess:** Even though one speaks about the ease in shopping, time saving issue, delivery at your place, ease in payment, i.e. debit/credit card option, etc. there is one such issue that makes the transaction next to impossible for both the buyer and the seller. For the buyer, since the product he is about to purchase feels the need to touch, see or sometimes even feel the utilization of the product, especially during purchasing fabrics, or furniture etc. Therefore, online marketing is the best option when the product is something abstract, like a trip, or something that isn't overly personalized, like a novel. On the other hand, in such a situation it becomes a tough job for a producer to show his salesmanship skill and convince the customer since everything is taking place online. He is no where able to deal with doubts and queries of his customers.

**2.Online marketing is cost consuming:** Even if you compare with the other traditional means of marketing which are quite cost sensitive, you cannot justify yourself as far as cost incurred in online marketing is concerned as well. A producer has to bear the heavy costs of designing well developed and well equipped software for success of his business. He has to update, maintain and even bear the online distribution costs. Thus these all costs are to be borne in order to provide your customers or clients according to their best necessities. Similarly it is far away unjustified for a customer also because most of the times, online marketing comes with the threat of certain hidden costs which are not revealed to the customers at the time of purchases.

**3.Cash on delivery facility:** Another facility which becomes a headache for the producers at times is the cash on delivery facility. Since the customers are provided with this facility, the producer finds himself in a position of locked investments until he gets back his money. Equally it is troublesome for the customer because once the product/service is sold; there is no option but to pay for it. Another problem is that the customer has little option left if the delivered product is not as the ordered one. Further getting refund of payment afterwards sometimes may even lead the matter to Consumers' Forum for arbitration and verdict which may not be to the liking of either of the two parties.

**4.Illiteracy or hesitance:** Sometimes even a very well designed web site of a firm lacks in bringing the estimated business. Updated information, hassle free buying procedures and much more also fails to do so. The reason is nothing but the illiteracy or the hesitance towards online buying on the part of the customers. Customers of particular demographic parameters still hesitate for buying online. There is also a problem of illiteracy of computer among the potential customers why certain amount of business is not cracked by the best online marketing strategy

**5.Privacy matters a lot:** Last but not the least, privacy of information matters a lot for both the parties involved. Privacy for the producer means exposure of certain information regarding the pricing, discounting policies and further manipulation of the same. Privacy on the part of the customer means certain transactions are likely to disclose the banking account details which may at times be misused. Net hackers has become a big terror in today's web world.

#### CONCLUSION

In simple terms, online marketing refers to using the power of Internet advertising to generate a response from your audience. Also known as Internet marketing or web marketing, online marketing is used by companies

selling goods and services directly to consumers as well as those who operate in the business-to-business sphere. Online marketing offers several benefits. It's convenient, affordable, and provides the opportunity for companies to track campaign results. Internet marketing allows even the smallest company to compete in a global marketplace. At the same time several benefits for the customers as well. All you need is a strong foundation with the judgment to think critically, act independently, and be relentlessly creative in order to come out with the best blend of ease, comfort and novelty.

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